

Ross Dowson archives – correspondence – Year 1981

- 02_02 Letter from SRDF, Toronto to Doug M., Halifax, re: sending flyers for distribution, as well as covers of a book (*Dowson vs. RCMP —ed.*) now on sale in major bookstores in Toronto
- 02_15 Letter to Jerry Houle, Vancouver, re: reviews and book sales in Vancouver; reviews and publicity in Toronto
- 02_15B Letter to John Sawatsky, Ottawa, re: RD thanks for review and requesting permission to use excerpt for publicity
- 02_27 Letter to Alex C., Vancouver, re: distribution of material to delegates at Vancouver & District Labor Council
- 02_99 Undated letter to *Canadian Dimension*, found in 1981, re: thanking editors for printing a SRDF leaflet
- 03_03 Letter to Sam (G.) Niagara Falls, re: a chat with an old friend and supporter
- 03_16 Letter to Louis Sinclair, Scotland, re: information on a couple of Canadian pioneer radicals
- 03_16B Letter to Douglas M., Halifax, re: thanks for distribution of SRDF literature, success with union donations and publicity
- 03_99 Notes to self, re: Canadian Bar Review article on international law as they affect Canada and Canadian civil rights obligations
- 04_05 Letter reply to Anne (D.), re: notes to a niece, and a reply
- 05_11 “Background” introduction to a SRDF pamphlet reproducing the Canadian Civil Liberties Association submission to the Hon. Roy McMurtry, A-G of Ontario, “Permit Dowson to charge the RCMP”
- 05_31 +Letter to R. Sims (LSA) Montreal: Lodge Hydro cut off but payment made by Lois, Murray proposes to buy all out, turning down LSA purchase proposal, decline offer camp rental to IS
- 05_99 (*Undated letter, ref. July 3 court date*) to Gerry Foley, editor *International Viewpoint*, (F.I.), recommending a CD article by Stan Grey on radical feminism, and protesting their article on Kopyto
- 06_07 Letter to Sam G., Niagara Falls, re: Forward bookstore wound up with a successful clearance sale, RD looking for temporary job

- 06_13 Letter to Dear friends (stakeholders in Camp Poundmaker), re: financial status and maintenance of the site in good order
- 06_19 ***Document: Socialist Rights Defence Fund press release***, re: Kopyto announces appeal of decision of Federal Appeals Court blocking Dowson's half million dollar slander suit against the RCMP
- 06_26 Letter to Dan Fast, president Rosedale NDP, re: regrets RD is not able to attend federal convention in Vancouver as delegate
- 08_24 Letter to *Intercontinental Press* (SWP), New York, re: surprised by lack of coverage of SRDF case, enclosing latest literature
- 10_09 ***Document: SRDF Press Release, re: "Supreme Court blocks Dowson suit;"*** upholding 'absolute privilege' of RCMP despite it's backing off on declaring defendants as 'subversives'
- 10_16 Letter to Bryan P., SFU, Burnaby, re: his positive article in *Our Generation* on the SRDF case; RD relates how campaign support was "hard won all the way"
- 10_28 Letter to the Editor, (Toronto) *Star*, re: protest red-baiting cartoon smearing anti-nuclear arms protesters
- 10_30 +Letter to R. Sims (LSA), Montreal: need meeting to consider LSA proposal to sell out TSS&ES shares at their purchase value
- 11_01 Letter to Anne (D.), Ottawa, re: A) the importance of the (Quebec trade unions') "Manifesto"; B) possibility for support for the appeal against the Supreme Court ruling from CCLA in Ottawa
- 11_23 Letter to the editor (*probably a Toronto daily—ed.*), re: correcting error of art critic on Russian vanguard art and the attitude of Lenin as opposed to later attitude of Stalinist government towards it
- 11_26 Letter to the Commission of Inquiry concerning the RCMP, re: protesting omission of RD's two submissions in the report; nor does it mention the published book "Dowson vs. the RCMP"
- 12_22 Letter to Ted W., Thompson MB, re: thanking him for his long article on labor struggles; problems with the settlement and loss of militants' support
- 12-99 (*Undated, found in 1981*), Letter to Ed Broadbent, Ottawa, re: forwarding to him a letter from the President of France to the "Socialist Party of Canada"

SRDF

50 Thorncliffe Ave.
Toronto M4K 1V5

February 2, 1981

Doug Meggison
1547 Grafton, #8
Halifax, N.S. B3J 2B9

Dear friend;

Under separate cover I have taken the liberty of sending some flyers on the SRDF efforts. I hope there are some good opportunities to distribute them at public meetings and rallies in the Halifax area. I am also enclosing a couple of covers of the book that has just been published which covers the case very well. We are hoping that A Pair of Trindles and Red Herring bookstores will order some for sale. ~~Waxx~~ If you know the folks there you might encourage them. We have already informed them of the availability of the book at 40% discount 5 copies or more. Perhaps you are in a position to approach the biggest and most commercially effective stores. The book is being handled by a distributor called Baatty and Chnrch but they are somewhat slow in getting their catalogue out. It is already being sold in the Toronto and Montreal outlets of Classic Books and the Toronto Coles outlet called the World's Biggest Bookstore, and doing not badly. We have a strong interest period until the McDonald Commission report comes down sometime in March.

As for the case itself. The Canadian Civil Liberties Assoc- is joining us in the appeal before the Ontario Courts. The federal judges have not yet given their judgement but as you know our lawyers are prepared to take it to the Supreme Court. Support is still coming in primarily from the unions---the Quebec government employees and from NDP ridings---Skeena in BC and Oriolle Park in the Toronto area.

Looking forward to hear more from you. We thought the listing of supporters was quite masterful---individuals regardless of rank or organization alphabetically. We will try to better next time.

sincerely



Ross Dowson

pardon the typing-- I have just come in from the CUPE hospital workers picket line.

Ross Dowson #2311
40 Homewood Ave
Toronto, M5Y 2K2

Feb 15, 1981

Jerry Houle, Vancouver

Dear Jerry

but unevenly

Thanks very much for forwarding the copies of The Peak with the extensive review of Dowson V RCMP. Not a very sophisticated review but interesting and I think useful for the next stage of promoting the book. In a couple of days we will be receiving a big review that is appearing in the York U paper Excalibur, and another that an ex-RCMPER I think is writing for a somewhat sophisticated cultural journal called Fuze which no doubt appears on the major Vancouver newsstands. Incidentally Spartacus books in Vancouver is handling it--but I do not know what the distributor Beatty and Church has been able to do in B.C. where along with Pulp press they have good connections. Got a live 15 minutes with CJRT and about 5 minuted video tape with CFTO which I do not think has been used yet. Aside from a straight but good review in the state capitalist Workers Action the press of the left although I have given the shots to the Canadian Forum, Dimensions and This Magazine have said nothing. And of course the mass media has said nothing. Still waiting for the big break. Sawatsky wrote a nice appreciative letter --he is the authro of the Doubleday book Men in the Shadows. Even without the big break we should be able to put out a good ad with comments from various sources shortly. I have just written another chapter on the Krever Commission findings--the Socialist Voice article was real crap. I say another chapter for if this edition sells out Beatty and Church want us to consider put out a new edition with added material in a pocket book format which they think will carry adequately in the mass market distribution network across Canada. We will see

I dont think you should go to the trouble of trying to hunt extra copies. I gave one you sent me to the distributor and have Xeroxed the one I kept, but if you did pick up any more--send them along.

Thanks for the favor

conradely

Ross

Vern told me that when he read one of the Krever testimony instalments in the paper he felt a little uneasy about a couple of formulations....but in reading the book he thought it was fine and excellent. Our Lambertist thought it was excellent--a few formulations always a problem in an extemporaneous performance under pressure, which I recall Cannon on one occasion offered no apologies for,

Bob Sherwood

February 15, 1981

Ross Dowson, #2311
40 Homewood Ave
Toronto, M4Y2K2
961-4554

John Sawatsky
265 Daly Ave., #31
Ottawa, Ont., K1N 6G4

Dear John Sawatsky

**(Dowson v. the RCMP-ed)*

Thanks very much for your kind words about my book. Even more for your going to the considerable trouble of outlining your views on an important question. Yes, the book is a trifle unbalanced although I think you must admit that the two RCMPers I am trying to lay charges against are not exactly constables, being senior officers in charge of a key operation. Furthermore they confessed and I can hope to get at them - on the way to getting at those who gave the orders-to those who supplied the wagons

The book is moving but it is slow to get the attention of the mass media that it needs to take off. We have extensive reviews so far in The Peak, the student paper at Simon Fraser, in Excalibur, the student paper at York University, and in Fuze, a glossy new cultural magazine. And we had a live 15 minute interview on CJRT and a taped video interview with CFTO which I don't think they have released yet.

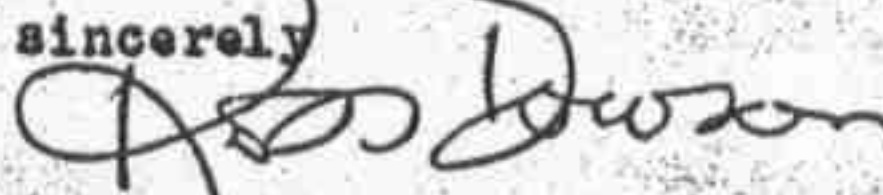
I am wondering if I have your agreement to use a couple of your comments --- "...Congratulations on your book. It was read(I read it) with considerable interest and appreciation. It makes a needed contribution--I say this without agreeing with your basic political platform."---John Sawatsky, author of Men in the Shadows. I can see no reason why you should object so I would like to go ahead unless I hear from you, not to, within, let us say, 10 days ? Thanks.

I am enclosing another chapter that I have just written(uncorrected proofs of) for your information--which deals in part with the question you raise in the body of your letter. ..and we will have much more against the generals ~~involved~~ of the operation with the publication of the McDonald report which I suppose you have noted is slated to go before the Privy Council, the RCMP top brass and others for editing before it is released under the sobriquet of the needs of "national security." I say another chapter, for the distributors, should this first run sell out want to ^{consider} a mass market format with new material that would sell at all pocket book outlets.

Indidentally you cut me badly with your opposition to prosecution of every soldier who fought for Germany in World War II, argument. I have never accepted the idea of German war guilt promoted by Stalin, and of course Churchill which only drove the German people even in desperation to see no other alternative but to fight on and on ~~unwillingly~~ under Hitler. Of course soldiers get shot for desertion--- and while I am not an apostle of free will, an RCMPer can always quit. and I think get a job at something else

I hope you find the material on the Krever report of interest.

sincerely



Ross Dowson

(Handwritten letter)

121 Church St.
Toronto
Feb 27/81

J. MacDonald, Vancouver

Dear Alex C.,

I sent a couple of days ago some material which would make a nice package – if you will – to be distributed to the delegates who attend the next meeting of the Vancouver & District Labor Council.

The Council has endorsed the suit – but it is from on top. We would like to get at the delegates and at the executives of the individual affiliates. They have studiously evaded sending us a copy of their annual publication that lists all affiliates & gives names and addresses that could be mailed to. It would be good if you can pick up a copy! But I would also be good if you could move in there very boldly and distribute the next meeting – all very Kosher.

Good to renew acquaintance—let`s do more of it – and anything for the book

All the best
Ross

(Handwritten letter found in Feb. 1981)

Editors of Canadian Dimension

Dear Comrades

I am sure that I speak with the voice of all of the hundreds of prominent Canadians who have publicly identified themselves with the efforts of the SRDF when I thank you very much for carrying the statement – (Support this Cry for Justice) in your February 1981 issue.

And it comes at a very needed time too – on the eve of the release of the Macdonald Commission report.

Thanks again for this support and any other support you are able to give this cause!

Salud

Ross Dowson

(Handwritten letter)

Toronto
March 3/81

Niagara Falls
Dear Sam

Yes – I started to read your letter. It was dated Feb. 16 – and here it is Mar. 3. Now after a short phone call I have examined the envelope upon which I record the mailings.

I have had 3 different addresses (...) Today's bundle which I include duplicates 1,2,3,5 plus Forward plus 6 and 7 will be mailed tomorrow (...)

I don't recall why and when the addresses were changed (...) I would think they should have checked your name in the city directory but with the cutbacks possibly this service has been scrapped – part of the ongoing deterioration of life in this period of capitalist decay and the ongoing persisting accumulation of commodities. After all it is mainly the poor who suffer declines in services – the rich are sending their kids to private schools as in the 'good old days' and hiring maids and servants of various kinds – often West Indians – illegally here shivering in their boots and forced to work for nothing. It is like the bus services. A year or so ago I went to speak at a meeting in Orillia. As I got off the bus I thought I should find out when the last one left for Toronto (...) the driver said: 'you're on it, mate – I'm turning around now.' So you have to buy a car to keep the machine whirling around.

Re Poland and the farmers. Did you see (the) news photo – I saw one and it was like an illustration for a Gorki tale of Tsarist Russia. The bureaucracy so favors the state farms that the private farmer (many of them) live a very backward life, a very primitive life, results in desperation and hatred of the regime – and as you note, look(ing) to God – but being also eminently practical to the workers in Solidarity.

The young Polish student who wrote the article in the previous Forward was working with Solidarity when in Poland recently – I see he called a meeting addressing himself to Canadian unionists in Hamilton on Feb. 24 but we weren't able to make it.

Looking forward to seeing you shortly. Hope you like the article on the Krever Report. It is a sort of next instalment in the book if we go pocket book format as our distributor favors – **if??** the first edition sells out. I figure we have sold about 800 copies so far without any real breaks in *(letter ends)*

(Handwritten letter)

March 16/81

Dear Comrade Louis Sinclair (Glasgow, Scotland)

Sorry very busy but here you are. Ruth Bullock has turned your letter over to me.

Watson – is Frank Watson alive and well in Toronto. He was out of the movement by late 1940s or early '50s. Yes, he addressed a public meeting in Toronto at the outbreak of the war and was promptly arrested and sent to jail for 3 or 6 months for speaking against the war. Unlike the US and Br Trotskyists the Canadians were immediately declared illegal – the last issue of the paper edited by Birney was stopped as it was going off the press.

I am almost positive that Richardson is a pseudonym for David Easton, now a famed University of Michigan academic. He left the movement after the outbreak of the war but after Birney (...ends)

Mar 16/81

Douglas Meggison, #8 - 1547 Grafton
Halifax NS

Dear Doug:

Thank very much for your information on the good work with the flyers the SRDF sent to you. Red Herring sent in an order for the book expressing disappointment that they had not been previously made aware of it - no doubt due to your good work.

Last week we managed to get a really big mailing into the faculty of U of Ottawa - the student body got it into the mail stream ^{free} after we sent all the envelopes & contents down by bus to the campus. Some key union locals have been coming thro with money - the better Carriers in Edmonton and the Retail

Clerks in Burnaby - so our accounts with the printers are in good shape - we are now working to cut back on the loan we took out to run the ad in the Globe and Mail - and the costs that the Judge levied on us for daring to demand our right to appear before the McDonald Commission. I see the latest Canadian Dimension runs the ad - and Greg Kealy is going to see that Labour / Le Travail & Dalhousie reviews the book that we have.

As author I get some copies - so I am taking the liberty of sending you one. And if we go for the book later on - the latest chapter on the Krever Report. Hope you like it

Yours in struggle
Doss Dawson

See Cdn Bar Review Mar 1981 Vol 59 No 1

Canada is one of the very few western countries that have adhered to the Optional Protocol to the Intl Covenant on Civil + Pol Rights. ^{they were adopted in 1966} ^{became optional 1976} ^{became binding Canada Aug 1976}
gives persons subject to Cdn jurisdiction since 1976 the right to petition the UN because of alleged violations of human rights as set forth in the Intl Covenant on Civil + Political Rights
a catalogue of basic civil + pol rights in treaty form

After adoption of the UN Bill of Rights, the first step have been taken in 1948

The Helsinki Declaration is a legally non-binding instrument. ~~The~~ Covenant is a legally binding the USSR etc under international law

As of April 15/80 ^{inter state complaint procedure accepted by 10} Canada + Iceland joined Austria Denmark Finland Italy Fed Republic of Germany New Zealand Norway Sweden US Netherlands

Under the Option Protocol individuals themselves can petition the UN + set in motion a procedure under which the compliance of the states domestic legal system with its intl obligations in the Covenant can be scrutinized

(X)

On the Human Rights Committee there is one Cdn member Walter Tarnopolsky ^{18 members in all establish under Intl Covenant on Civil + Pol Rights}
the Ctee considers communications received from individuals

don't confuse this with the Human Rights Commission of UN
Canada has signed the ^{Optional} Protocol - as of April 15/80
He was in the delegation that handed in petition urging Ottawa to prosecute RCMP revealed as breacher the law

Canada offered the possibility for "persons subject to Cdn jurisdiction to take their case to the Human Rights Committee if they contended the law in Canada be it statutory or common, ^{pro or fed as applied by the} Cdn courts is in contravention of the rights + freedoms set forth in the Covenant
23 states had accepted the procedure - only 7 other Western countries have adhered to the protocol - Denmark, Finland Norway Iceland, Italy Sweden Netherlands

We have to show exhausted all domestic remedy - our appeal to Supreme Court then to cabinet
not only did they violate the covenant by slandering me - but they acted upon it (doctrinate)
don't we have to spell out the sections of the Covenant + violated
individuals cases under the protocol

adeq treatment of Dawson is a
violation of the United Nations Bill of Rights specifically the Intl Covenant
~~the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the~~
General Assembly in 1948
The International Covenant on Civil + Political Rights adopted on March 23, 1976
This is a catalogue of basic civil + pol rights in treaty form
completes the UN Bill of Rights the first step on which was the 1948
adoption by the General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human
rights

Canada adhered to the Optional Protocol to the Intl Covenant on Civil + Pol Rights
became binding on Canada on Aug 19/1976 - Canada signed the optional
protocol on April 15/1980
by this act persons subject to Cdn jurisdiction are given the
right to petition the UN because of alleged violations
of human rights as set forth in the Intl Covenant on civil + pol rights
Whereas the Helsinki Declaration is a legally non-binding instrument
the Covenant is a treaty binding the USSR etc under intl law

Under the Optional Protocol individuals themselves can petition the UN
the operating body is the Human Rights Cttee ~~one of the 18~~
Tarnopolsky is

E2-1981

Wanda's Review v. 5.10.81

(April 5/81)

81/4/5

Dear Ross, After waiting $1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.
I was given this by a harried
assistant ^{at City Hall} who will send me
some other documents when
she finds them. So, I'll
get back to you about it.

Anne

I thought Ottawa-Hull was one of the paper capitals of the world! Why do you use
old pieces of paper with other data on the back. S... by things are not that tough!
Hold on! In 21 months I will be collecting my pension and I will be able to make an allocation
to you. The material that you sent on ~~the~~ Canadian Connection, along with a newspaper clipping
has been more than adequate to write a small but important article in the coming issue. You get soon!
Many thanks for your going to the trouble of setting it. Do you know a Mary Hegon 722-8270
or a Karen Hill 728-1865 who seem to be instrumental in pulling it all together.
With the failure of the NDP caucus in particular Ed Broadbent - you see the full depth
of Broadbent's rotten position. I wonder who these women are - and are they doing anything new - that
this project seems shymed - or is it in their opinion
Yes - and while there is space I want to thank you formally for the just terrific Christmas
gift of the photo of the Unsworth Ave Dawson family. I have it stuck up front with
Diego Rivera, Goya and Bellini and others. One of the best gifts I have ever received.
The ~~Book~~ of Simon Fraser and New-Excelsior of York in its coming issue. have savours of
our book Dawson & RCM P - as Carleton or Ottawa going to clear things with the back in the very heart
of RCM power - as the editors - they will have The Book + Excelsior on file - its the next excelsior,
I hope you entertained how well - all the best. Ross

Daph - I see I have extra room

Women's Conference Sensation
Con. to meet assembly again

Permit Dowson to charge the RCMP

submission from the
Canadian Civil Liberties Association

to The Honourable R. Roy McMurtry
Attorney General of Ontario

re Ross Dowson, the RCMP, and the
Principles of Prosecutorial Discretion

Delegation

Professor Donald Smiley
(Vice-President)

Terry Meagher
(Secretary)

Ian Scott, Q.C.
(Member, Board of Directors)

Professor Ken Swan
(Member, Board of Directors)

A. Alan Borovoy
(General Counsel)

Allan Strader
(Research Director)

presented in Toronto May 11, 1981 pursuant
to written submissions filed in Dec. 1980.

Background—On March 9, 1979 RCMP officials admitted before the Ontario Royal Commission presided over by Judge Krever that they had forged, uttered and circulated false documents in a Checkmate Operation against the now defunct League for Socialist Action. The admission resulted from information brought to the attention of the commission by the former leader of the LSA, Ross Dowson, who had earlier in December 1977 launched a half million dollar slander suit against the RCMP. The Socialist Rights Defence Fund organized to finance the suit has won the support of internationally and nationally known figures, the national convention of the New Democratic Party, labor councils, union locals and other organizations of social importance.

After a series of appeals by Dowson's lawyers that criminal charges be laid against the RCMP, Attorney General McMurtry finally agreed to set up an OPP investigation. On April 25, 1980 Dowson and Riddell, another former LSA leader, swore out charges before a Toronto Justice of the Peace against two top RCMP officers. The Attorney General's department intervened to obtain four adjournments, finally, on October 30, 1980, issuing a stay of proceedings. On November 26, 1980 the Supreme Court of Ontario upheld McMurtry's stay against an appeal by Dowson's lawyers who are now preparing to go before the Ontario Court of Appeal with the support of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association. From the Calendar of Events in *Dowson V the RCMP* published by Forward Publications, Box 778, Adelaide St. P.O., Toronto, \$1.95 postpaid.

The Canadian Civil Liberties Association is deeply concerned about the stay of proceedings which has been filed in this matter, at the direction of the Attorney General. The reasons which were given for this action could effectively contaminate our administration of justice with some dubious double standards. To the extent that the decision of the Crown not to prosecute depends upon the OPP investigation of the particular facts of this case, we are obviously unable to respond. We have neither interviewed the witnesses nor had access to the OPP report. But such considerations need not inhibit any member of the public from attempting to evaluate the broad grounds of public policy which have been invoked in justification of the Attorney General's decision. In our view, these grounds cannot support the Government's reluctance to prosecute. A fortiori, they cannot justify this intrusion on the right of *civilians* to lay charges on their own.

The Attorney General filed and distributed a memorandum which purports to explain the policy basis for the stay of proceedings. We have assumed that this memorandum contains a complete account of the Attorney General's policy on this matter and our ensuing comments respond accordingly.

The Attorney General's memorandum lays heavy stress on what it calls the "inherent contradiction" which allegedly affected the operations of the RCMP Security Service since the early 1960's. Essentially, this "contradiction" involved the issue of breaking the law in order to protect the interests of national security. According to the memorandum, the

RCMP attempted on numbers of occasions, without success, to obtain the guidance of the federal government on this matter. The alleged failure of the federal government to provide this guidance appears to have been a critical factor in the Attorney General's action to stay these proceedings.

In our view, this is no justification at all. To whatever extent federal Cabinet Ministers failed to give the requisite guidance or even knowingly tolerated misconduct, they ought to be politically censured or possibly even prosecuted themselves. But this cannot excuse the unlawful conduct of any RCMP officer. Like the ordinary civilian, or perhaps even more so, police officers are presumed to know the law. Like the ordinary civilian, or perhaps even more so, police officers cannot be absolved simply because they may have superiors who are even more guilty. Indeed, in the post Nuremberg period, even obedience to a direct order of a superior will not excuse a subordinate for the commission of an offence.

The Attorney General's memorandum argues, however, that whether or not such factors could afford a legal defence, they should mitigate against a decision to prosecute. The memorandum points out that the impugned acts of the officers in this case formed part of a general RCMP operation known as "Checkmate." What these officers are supposed to have done was no worse than what was allegedly involved in other "Checkmate" situations. And it was certainly no worse than what has been imputed to their seniors and superiors in this very case. But a dearth of evidence with respect to the others precludes prosecutions against them. It would be unfair, argues the memorandum, to single out these officers.

To accept such reasoning is to enshrine a double standard in our legal system. Civilian wrongdoers have rarely been excused because of the knowledge that undiscovered other people are equally or even more guilty. Even within the same conspiratorial operation, junior members have been prosecuted in numbers of situations where the seniors could not be identified. Indeed, so often where civilians have been concerned, the only way juniors could avoid prosecution was to identify and testify against their superiors. Why should police officers enjoy a special immunity?

In this connection, it would be helpful to dispose of a recurring irrelevancy. Time and again when this matter has appeared in the media, it has been coupled with the Attorney General's alleged inability to obtain evidence from the federal authorities and the McDonald Commission. However meritorious the Attorney General's complaint may be in general, it has little application to the issues which have arisen in this case. The *only* withheld evidence which is mentioned in the memorandum concerns the issue of the "inherent contradic-

tion" — what guidance, if any, did the federal government give to the RCMP. As indicated, there is no reason why any missing evidence on this point should make any difference to the exercise of prosecutorial discretion. Even assuming unwarranted failures or culpability on the part of the federal government, there should be no inhibitions about prosecuting members of the RCMP against whom there is otherwise sufficient evidence of wrongdoing.

Another factor which was cited as militating against prosecution concerns the consequences of an acquittal. An acquittal, it is believed, would give rise to the risk that the activities at issue would be perceived by the public and the police as either lawful or, if unlawful, acceptable. Moreover, an acquittal might result in the expansion of the law with respect to a "mistake of law" because of the reliance by the potential accused on a perceived existence of legal authority.

As far as police and public perceptions are concerned, we believe it would be better for the administration of justice to sustain an acquittal than to avoid a prosecution. While there may be a risk that an acquittal might appear to vindicate the impugned activities, the failure to prosecute would compound this risk. It would create the impression that the *government* condoned the wrongdoing. Any acquittal growing out of the "perceived existence of legal authority" is more likely to emanate from a jury making general findings of fact than from a judge enunciating a specific doctrine of law. It is unlikely, therefore, that the "mistake of law" defence would be expanded by an acquittal in such a case.

In this connection, the Attorney General's memorandum cited the American decision not to prosecute the CIA mail openers. Apparently the potential accused in that country "reasonably believed" that their "acts were authorized." Even if a reasonable mistake of law could be seen as a mitigating factor in this country, little sustenance could be drawn from the CIA case. American constitutional law is very complex. Until recently, it was generally believed that in national security cases the U.S. President could unilaterally authorize mail opening. Even when the Courts had occasion to correct this misapprehension, they explicitly avoided applying their decision retroactively. Moreover, it was generally acknowledged that the CIA mail openers reasonably believed that they were acting under Presidential instructions. To such extent, they could rely on a mistake of fact not law.

The illegalities which may have been committed in the "Checkmate" operation are not attributable to any comparable considerations. The question raised in the "inherent contradiction" was whether unlawful conduct could be justified in the interests of national security. Apart from imminent perils

to life or limb, this issue concerns policy not law. In situations of the kind involved here, there is no reasonable basis to believe that, as a matter of law, national security could excuse whatever misconduct may have been involved.

There was some suggestion in the Attorney General's memorandum that in such circumstances, a clear statement that the impugned activity is unlawful would provide a greater deterrent with respect to such conduct in the future than would be achieved by any unsuccessful prosecution. On the contrary, there is reason for concern that a *failure* to prosecute will convey a signal that the government is afraid of a confrontation with the RCMP. To prosecute now, even unsuccessfully, conveys to the potentially delinquent officer that the government will not tolerate such conduct. At the very least, such officer will more likely realize that he will have to face the unpleasantness of a prosecution and, therefore, some risk of a conviction. But when the government believes the impugned conduct to be unlawful and decides nevertheless against prosecution, it could well make itself, the administration of justice, and the law look like "paper tigers."

It was also argued that it might be unfair to prosecute individual officers in those cases where the law breaking was a matter of official RCMP policy. According to this argument, what is primarily at issue is not the personal guilt of those who performed the acts but the official policy upon which they were based. In our view, it is not an either/or proposition. One of the effective ways to secure a change in an impugned policy is to prosecute those who unlawfully implemented it.

The central defect of the Attorney General's memorandum is its failure to take account of the public perception which is likely to emerge as a result of the posture it adopts. Large sectors of the public could well come to believe that there are double standards in this country, that civilian law breaking is punishable but RCMP law breaking is not. The most likely result would be an erosion of confidence in the administration of justice. To whatever extent some constituencies can break the law with impunity, others may be encouraged to believe they should be able to do likewise.

The failure to apply a single standard could threaten to unravel our voluntary infrastructures. Consider, for example, the position of the Canadian Labour Congress during the last strike of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. Despite a common and bitter opposition to the special act of Parliament terminating the strike, the CLC declined to support CUPW at the point when the latter's action became unlawful. As the public knows, CLC President Dennis McDermott was vigor-

ously attacked for his stand by significant elements of his own constituency. What will this country say to its Dennis McDermotts the next time they face such movements to defy the law? Indeed, so long as RCMP wrongdoers remain immunized, what *can* anyone say?

On the basis of the foregoing, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association respectfully requests that this prosecutorial policy be amended. To the extent that the memorandum at issue remains on the public record in its present form, it incurs a serious risk of undermining public confidence in the administration of justice. As far as this case is concerned, we believe that the Attorney General should withdraw the stay of proceedings. Of all the reasons which the memorandum has advanced against the proposed prosecutions, the only potentially acceptable one concerns the allegedly inadequate case of legal guilt. As indicated earlier, we are in no position to pass judgment on the validity of the OPP investigation for such purposes. Nor have we attempted to negotiate the conflicting interpretations of the Criminal Code. In any event, however, such considerations would apply primarily to a decision of the *Crown* not to prosecute. They cannot as readily support such interference with a *citizen's* right to prosecute.

In the first place, the citizen might have uncovered material which remains unknown to the OPP. This is rendered possible in these circumstances because of the obviously strained relations between the Trotskyist group and the police at all levels. Secondly, conflicting interpretations of the Criminal Code should be resolved by proper judicial determination and not by peremptory executive fiat. In the circumstances, this means allowing the justice to hear the parties in the usual way. Thirdly, this interference with a private prosecution represents a relatively rare intrusion on the normal and historic rights of citizens. To the extent that it is allowed to stand, it risks exacerbating this apprehended double standard in the treatment of police and civilians. The government will appear not only reluctant to pursue but also eager to protect police wrongdoers.

Accordingly, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association respectfully requests the following measures:

- 1) the amendment of prosecutorial policy in accordance with the arguments advanced above.
- 2) the withdrawal of the stay of proceedings in this case.

May 31, 1981

Robert Sims
Montreal

Dear Bob:

v I received your note re the hydro bill on the 25 or 26th after the holiday weekend...with its reminder date of April 19

The delay resulted in our landing in the Camp on May 22 to find the power cut off with a couple of dozen of persons coming up to celebrate Vic Hugh's birthday and the holiday of May 24. Fortunately I found a note in the meter saying that they had cut it off but it could be put on by paying an added penalty of six dollars. Fortunately Lois had \$102.00 in cash -we hurriedly phoned them and got them up to turn it on again the same day May 22. Everyone pitched in and cleaned up the lodge for the summer.

You are mistaken in thinking that the bill is for the lodge and the persons such as Vic, Lois and Murray who have cottages there. The latter all have their own meters. The bill covers only the lodge and is larger than possibly you anticipate as it contains a portion that is an estimate of what may be ~~consumed~~ consumed in the next couple of months. It is also a minimum bill that Hydro charges whether you use any hydro whatsoever--I suppose to cover maintenance of the lines. Lois for several years did not use sufficient hydro to meet and go over the minimum. I doubt that the lodge has consumed the minimum over the past years but I really do not know for sure. At anyrate I have paid the bill from my own pocket now. I will be contacting the Hydro to put the account in my name so such an unfortunate muddle does not occur again. I will also be contacting the Bell to find out what the outstanding account there is because ~~of~~ course they will not restore the service without being paid up. I will pay ~~it~~ out of my own pocket but I will not tell them to turn it on as I do not know where we *stand*. These two bills ~~have~~ will no doubt total up to more than what I had accumulated over and above minimal operating expenses over the last several years and will probably leave nothing at all for the several loads of gravel and the stove that we must have--for instance ~~next~~ to rent to the IS

I would suppose Lydna has told you the results of the meeting which I was pleased to see came off with a certain amount of civility that I was afraid would not prevail.

Murray D put forward a proposition that he would buy everyone out and make arrangements of his own with Lois and Vic who have cottages --or he wants to sell his lot with its cabin on it. I chaired the meeting and handled it as a notice of motion, so to speak, so we could ~~handle~~ with by pass my proposal that it be agreed to my selling one of my two lots to Claire Dowson etc etc and get on with the TSS&ES plus proposition to sell 7 shares for \$20,000

and the proposition of renting the lodge to the IS ~~xxx~~

As no doubt Lynda has told you everyone but the TSS&ES and John R took the stand that your \$20,000 bid is no go and that we stick by the agreement. There was general agreement that the corporation would try to meet that understanding. There was also an understanding that TSS&ES, John and George would meet all obligations until this was settled. I would think that it would be very good all around if we were able to wrap this up as soon as possible--we are already into the first half year on the taxes, insurance etc. I am looking forward to hearing from you ~~xxx~~

It was also agreed that we would not rent the camp to the IS--- there was no vote as I felt that there could be misunderstandings about it. But it was very clear---and it is obvious to me that there would be nothing in it for anyone. I would suppose that Lynda would inform the I.S. or Tony would

I will be phoning the Bell later in the day

sincerely

Ross Dowson

Vic H made an interesting comment on the value of the land (probable) on the basis of what his son refused to pay for some much more accessible land down the road across from his house. As I suspected it has very little value and we can now see those who put cottages up really and truly did make a donation to the LSA so that there could be a camp for which *now* none of us really have any use for. The agreement really proves to have taken all this into account--and even generously. It would seem to me to be very difficult to sell any lots now to anyone not already there.

Bell Telephone got back to me to tell me that there is a bill of 44.03 outstanding. I will pay this as soon as I am able--today is rent day. and I think that I am now cut off Unemployment Insurance

Ross Dowson, #2311
40 Homewood Ave
Toronto, M4Y 2K2

International Viewpoint
2 Rue Richard Lenoir
93108, Montreal
France

attention Gerry Foley

Dear Comrades;

In reading over a recent issue I noted your excellent article on women and the Nicaraguan revolution and that Cahiers du Feminisme published by the French comrades is enjoying some success

I had occasion to remind myself of the excellent article that appeared in Canadian Dimension a few years back by Stan Gray. Perhaps you had occasion to meet him when he was in England, as a student. During the stirring Quebec days he was noted as the student leader for a Francophone McGill University in Montreal. He is now a very effective leader of a movement centered around Hamilton struggling for worker safety on the job. When he was in England Ernie Tate tells me he was very close to us. This article has many merits even though I am late getting it to you--and is notable for its sensitivity to radical feminism and the insight it gives on the role on Stalinism in the labor movement.

I have promoted it and that is why it was again brought to my attention. I think that it would be well worthwhile translating it into French and running it serially in Cahiers--or even IV

I am sure that the editors of Canadian Dimension would give you permission to reprint. There is no purpose in my involving myself--all the more so that their latest issue has a rotten major article on our Comrade Harry Kopyto who as you possibly know is the lawyer for my 7-8 year long suit against the federal police here--the RCMP

Would you give some consideration as to its use and certainly pass it along to the French comrades

otskyist greetings

with Treos

Ross Dowson

The Dowson suit appeal comes before the Supreme Court July 3 *

Letter (unsigned) by R.D., dated June 7, 1981 to:
Sam Gampel, (non-member, financial supporter of R.D. for many years)
583 7 Main St., Niagara Falls, Ont. L2G 5Z6

Dear Sam:

That is the address that I sent off to *Intercontinental Press/Imprecor* (correct?) and to which they are already sending you a one year subscription so that with the end of my sending you copies you will not miss an issue. With your last BMO (*bank money order --ed.*) I am estimating that the bookstore account is somewhere in the neighbourhood of being correct and I am closing it off. The bookstore account sent off the \$41 CDN that is the Intercontinental sub rate as you will note from their masthead...so when you have an opportunity send the store account the \$41. to Forward Books, c/o Box 778 Adelaide Street Post Office, Toronto M5C 2K1.

Yes, the store is wound up--as far as landlords are concerned. We now have a Forward Publishing administration space at the back of Action Print at 415 Adelaide Street West, just west of Spadina. Lots of details to straighten away not the least the compression of our necessary goods into quite a bit smaller space. It was a hectic week wringing all we could out of 121 (Church) and shoehorning things into Adelaide. If I say so myself, tinged with regret, the liquidation the store was quite masterful. Yes we actually did sell out to the walls, display racks and all to the extent that the wall cases displayed face-out instead of spine-out. I never realized we had such a large and generally excellent stock. The closure had quite a traumatic effect on some persons however over the three years we were there the revolutionary left never really utilized it despite its non-sectarian character. At any rate the rent increase excluded our carrying on not only there but wherever else we looked; the store was heavily subsidized at its share of \$700 let alone the share of its asking \$1,250 and what we found to be the situation elsewhere. I too am now well into my most important years--my last if all goes well and I cannot let myself be tied down like the store does. I don't collect (an) old-age pension until September 4, 1982--so I must now find an interval job. It will be interesting to see how I manage to make out.

The book on Poland you ask about never came within what we considered we had to allow for shipping time and it along with everything else but an issue of Critique was cancelled. There has been talk about setting up a book service but I have first told everyone that we will first have to see how much time I will have to allocate to make a living, to keep my fingers in the Ward 6 and Saint George-Rosedale NDP and get Forward rolling again, etc., etc , and besides I want to do some writing on Canadian Trotskyism.

Within an hour I have to be at the Ward 6 NDP annual meeting--we have to get the paper out so I have to do considerable more cleaning up in order to get out (to) the NDP federal convention where I hope to make a splash with our suit (*against the RCMP --ed.*) I suppose you noted the LeDain unfavorable judgement. Kopyto thinks we have a possibility to make an appeal which he is (readying)--and the appeal against McMurtry's blockage comes up within a few weeks.

Yes... I will try to keep in touch.

June 7, 1981
40 Homewood Ave
Toronto, M1Y2K2
961-4554

Sam Gampel
3827 Main Street
Niagara Falls, Ont. L2G 5Z6

Dear Sam:

That is the address that I sent off to Intercontinental/Imprecor (correct!) and to which they are already sending you a one year subscription so that with the end of my sending you copies you will not miss an issue. With your last BMO I am estimating that the bookstore account is somewhere in the neighborhood of being correct and I am closing it off. The bookstore account sent off the \$41 CDN that is the Intercontinental sub rate as you will note from their masthead....so when you have an opportunity send the store account the \$41. to Forward Books, c/o Box 778 Adelaide Street Post Office, Toronto, M5G 2K1

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Within an hour I have to be at the Ward 6 NDP annual meeting--we have to get the paper out so I have to do considerable more cleaning up in order to get out for the NDP federal convention where I hope to make a splash with our suit. I suppose you noted certain unfavorable judgments. Kopyton thinks we have a possibility to win an appeal which he is reading--and the appeal against McCarthy's blockage comes up with a few weeks.

Yes, I will try to keep in touch

June 13, 1981

Camp Poundmaker Incorporated
Ross Dowson, #2311
40 Homewood Ave.,
Toronto, M4Y2K2

Dear friend:

Paid by cheque June 16/81

We have now received the final 1981 realty tax for Camp Poundmaker. Like everything else our taxes have gone up again. This time it rose 158.55 to the total \$558.60

While we have new information in the township's methods and could make an even more precise allocation of the tax bill based on the evaluation of the different buildings on the lots I think this would require a meeting of all the owners. While I raised this earlier with Darrell E. however nothing has yet been done in this respect- and the second major instalment of the outstanding amount is due on June 30--with the final instalment due in September

I therefore propose to follow the past agreeable method with only one change. This year Murray Dowson's building is on the bill. I propose to allocate it the average number of units allocated to Lois B and the Hugh's, that is - up from one unit to eight units. Therefore I am dividing the total among 52 units as follows:

Bedard	11	118.14	Newbigging	1	10.74
Hugh	4	42.96	Exant	1	10.74
TSS & ES	24	257.76	Riddell	1	10.74
Dowson M	8	85.92	Martim	1	10.74
Dowson R	1	10.74			
				52	558.48

The camp facilities are in good shape. The lodge has been cleaned up for the season and we have the paint to finish the job on the ceiling which will brighten the place up considerably. The chimney has been topped with proper tiles so we no longer have to resort to climbing up and down putting on a cap to keep the rain out of the fireplace. There are batches of new pocket books for reading while you lounge. The trees have registered a fine new growth--we have brought down a considerable number of the elm that have been dying. We will have to replace the baseball backstop with cedar as the old posts have rotted. All in all we are ready for the coming season. I have just been told that the telephone has been disconnected for non-payment of the bill. Since this is a necessary safety device and convenience we will have to look into its being made operational again.

And as I said earlier the taxes are due June 30 so I would appreciate it if you would forward your share to the above address in my favor

sincerely

Ross Dowson
Ross Dowson

SOCIALIST DEFENCE FUND

CHRISTINE JUDGE, Administrative Secretary
HARRY PAINE, Pres. of St. David's NDP, Treasurer

50 Thorncliffe Ave.
Toronto M4K 1V5

FROM OUR GROWING
NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS*

INTERNATIONAL:
Naom Chomsky, Jessica Mitford,
Linus Pauling, Benjamin Spock

CANADA
ROBERT ALBRITTON, professor
of political science,
York University
MARY BOYCE, lawyer
ANDREW BREWIN, NDP-MP
DOUGLAS CAMPBELL, actor
CARL CUNEO, professor
of sociology,
McMaster University
KENNETH DANSON, lawyer
CHANDLER DAVIS, professor
of mathematics,
University of Toronto
DR. D. DICKMAN, psychiatrist
DR. JAMES J. ENDICOTT of
The Far East Newsletter
SAM FOX, president
of the Labour Council of
Metro Toronto
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Dalhousie University
DANNY GOLDSTICK, professor
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University of Toronto
CY GONICK of
Canadian Dimension
REV. DUKE T. GRAY of
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Toronto
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Public Employees
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history, Dalhousie University
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Glendon Campus, York
H. C. PENTLAND, professor
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AL PURDY, poet
JAMES W. RINEHART, professor
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SATU REPO, author
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department of social work,
University of Manitoba
A. L. WERNICK, professor
of sociology,
Trent University
STEPHEN WILLIAMS of
Exile and Toronto Life

*organizations listed for
identification only

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

* Toronto lawyer Harry Kopyto announced today that he will be seeking leave to appeal a decision of Judges LeDain, MacKay and Ryan of the Federal Appeals Court that would further block Ross Dowson's half a million dollar slander suit against the RCMP.

Early this month the Court finally handed down its judgement dismissing Dowson's action on the grounds that the statements subject of the suit made by police officers in response to the then Ontario NDP leader's enquiries as to whether the NDP had been subject to RCMP surveillance, and subsequently released to the media by Ontario Attorney-General Roy McMurtry, were protected by absolute privilege and thereby not subject to suit.

* Sometime during the week commencing September 7 Kopyto will be appearing before the Ontario Court of Appeal. With the aid of Canadian Civil Liberties Association lawyer Ian Scott he will once again seek permission to lay charges against two top RCMP officers implicated in "dirty tricks" against Dowson and others. Following the RCMP's admission before the Ontario Royal Commission on the Security of Health Information that it had forged and circulated false information in a disruptive action against Dowson and others, a series of attempts to lay charges were blocked when Attorney-General McMurtry finally issued a stay of proceedings.

Last week the Quebec Justice Department laid charges against 11 members or former members of the RCMP for a series of violations of the Criminal Code during operations against organizations of legitimate dissent in Quebec.

In the light of these two developments the Socialist Rights Defence Fund, organized to support Dowson's suit against the RCMP has decided to raise its efforts onto a new and higher plane. In the coming months SRDF intends to seek added support across the country and increased financial aid to carry forward its actions.

Among recent additions to its continually growing list of supporters are the Hamilton Labour Council, the Edmonton Letter Carriers Union, Sylvain Simard, president of the Parti Quebecois, region Outaouais centre de recherche en civilisation Canadienne-francais, several NDP riding associations across the country, and a number of prominent academics at McMaster and the University of Ottawa, etc.

For further information, contact 961-4554.

*Mailed widely
Labor Orgs in Can 1981
Metro T Labor Council
as press release
etc*

June 19, 1981

82-1981
Friday, June 26, 1981
40 Homewood Ave, #2311
Toronto

Dan Fast, president of Rosedale NDP

Dear Dan;

Unfortunately I have had to decide not to go to our party convention in Vancouver. I never did hear from the convention arrangements committee as to my request for assurance that I would be able to put up a Socialist Rights Defence Fund display in the convention area--a very logical request it seems to me in the light of the support that the previous national convention gave the case and in the intervening period the widening support that the case has won from riding associations and labor councils across the country. The suggestion that was made to you over the phone ~~that~~ by a spokesperson of the committee that some alternatives might be worked out with the UBC campus administration are altogether too problematical, it seems to me to justify my firming up the arrangements that I have made for another one of our delegates to take two heavy cartons out on his railway ticket. And then too there is the matter of the financing of my ticket. Even with aid from the convention travelling expenses pool I would be heavily dependent on a commitment from an SRDF supporter to underwrite a considerable proportion of my trip expenses -- on the basis of course that I would be able to do something really worthwhile on behalf of the SRDF. This now being highly unlikely, added to the fact, as I told you, that I am now unemployed I cannot see my way clear to taking on the financial aspects of ~~having~~ taking up my credentials and proceeding to the convention.

I am very sorry that as an elected delegate I probably stopped someone else from going, although you will no doubt recall that in putting forward my name I gave a high priority to SRDF efforts along with my desire that the convention take a strong anti-nuclear arms position. I am enclosing my credentials. Possibly the Rosedale delegates and alternates when they gather in Vancouver will be able, with the agreement of the credentials committee, to appoint from their numbers an alternate to fill the vacancy that I am leaving. I am hoping to re-coup some of the funds that I have advanced--the \$125 delegate fee, etc. I have contacted Wardair and returned the ticket and reimbursement credit.

Too bad about this. I am looking forward to hearing our delegates' reports on the convention at a future meeting.

sincerely

Ross Dowson

Ross Dowson
#2311, 40 Homewood Ave.
Toronto, Canada
M4Y 2K2

August 24, 1981

Intercontinental Press
New York

Dear comrades

Some Forward readers have been puzzled that to date Inter-
continental Press has failed to give any coverage of my
now four-year-old suit against the RCMP. Especially
considering the broad publicity the case has received in
Canada, and also considering the not unrelated case of
the SWP in the U.S.

We are enclosing our most recent informational material
which we are now circulating on the eve of the release of
the report of the McDonald Commission Inquiry into police
wrongdoing which is getting prominent publicity. We hope
you will now give us the publicity the case deserves, es-
pecially now that Socialist Voice has finally done so in
its May 18 issue.

Fraternally

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ross Dowson", written in a cursive, flowing style.

SOCIALIST RIGHTS DEFENCE FUND

50 Thorncliffe Ave.
Toronto M4K 1V5

FROM OUR GROWING
NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS*

Typeset & printed
under union contract
TTU #91

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Naom Chomsky, Jessica Mitford,
Lina Pauling, Benjamin Spock

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*organizations listed for
identification only

CHRISTINE JUDGE, Administrative Secretary
HARRY PAINE, Pres. of St. David's NDP, Treasurer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 9, 1981

Supreme Court blocks Dowson suit

The Supreme Court of Canada has turned down an appeal by Ross Dowson to pursue his half million dollar suit against the RCMP for slandering as subversive the now defunct League for Socialist Action, and himself as its leader, along with un-named "ex-communists," all members of the New Democratic Party.

Judges Laskin, Estey and Lamer heard the appeal, presented by Toronto lawyer Harry Kopyto, with the aid of Carl Brand, before the Supreme Court of Canada last week. The court upheld the ruling made early in May by the Federal Court of Appeal that the statements complained of were made on an occasion of "absolute privilege."

Dowson's suit was launched in the Fall of 1977 when the attorney-general of Ontario admitted in the Ontario Legislature that the NDP had been under investigation and subject to surveillance by the RCMP, the nature and scope of which is not known to this day. At the same time he uttered the slanderous statements prepared by top RCMP officials, and had them issued to the public in the form of a press release.

Dowson's suit was the only civil action against the RCMP arising out of the shocking revelations of its widespread harassment and violations of the civil rights of a wide number of individuals and social organizations of completely legitimate dissent in the '60s and '70s, as affirmed by the recently released report of the Royal Commission headed by Mr. Justice D.C. McDonald. The allegation that its targetted victims were "subversives" was used by the RCMP to justify its widespread illegalities.

Blocked since its inception from even reaching the preliminary stage of examination of discovery preparatory for a trial, now, with the Supreme Court's ruling, the Dowson suit has no further course to pursue within the Canadian judicial system. However, in a statement to the press, Dowson said that besides its civil rights aspects involving the legitimacy of socialist thought, the matter is of crucial legal importance since the court rulings not only uphold immunity of statements made by government leaders but have extended immunity from lawsuits for defamation to a police force, to members of the RCMP.

Ironically, Dowson observed, the RCMP itself, in the testimony of its director-general before the McDonald Commission, backed off from claiming its targets were "subversives" as defined in the Criminal Code by admitting that the term was used "for want of a better word... where it was clearly seen that the purpose of an organization or individuals were at cross-purposes with the maintenance of domestic stability."

Appeal to uphold private prosecution

The dismissal by the Ontario Court of Appeal of efforts to uphold the longstanding and historic right of a citizen to initiate private prosecution constitutes a serious setback for the fight against RCMP illegalities committed against a wide range of labor and socialist organizations in the late '60s and '70s. It also sets a dangerous legal precedent that can have grave repercussions for civil rights in years to come. But it is resulting in the firming up of forces that appeared before the court's three judges last month in a common effort to overturn the Supreme Court of Ontario's upholding of Attorney-general Roy McMurtry's intervention in the lower courts and his final issuing of a stay of proceedings against efforts to lay charges against the RCMP.

Ross Dowson's lawyer Harry Kopyto, Professor Howard Buchbinder on behalf of the defunct Praxis Institute represented by Paul Copeland, and the counsel for the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, Ian Scott, Q.C., have announced their intention to apply to the Supreme Court of Canada to overturn the ruling of the Ontario Court of Appeals.

Scott's intervention on behalf of the CCLA was backed up by a powerful and well-argued brief that had been presented earlier to McMurtry seeking the amendment of the prosecutorial policy framed to justify his department's intervention, and calling for the withdrawal of the stay of proceedings so that Dowson can lay charges against two RCMP officers who admitted to have forged, uttered and circulated false documents against an organization of which Dowson had been a leader.

Dowson announced that prominent organizations and individuals who have identified themselves with the Socialist Rights Defence Fund, set up in support of the suit, are now being consulted to consider further actions. One proposal is to constitute a tribunal headed by persons of repute which by hearing testimony presented under oath would give Dowson, and others with relevant testimony, an opportunity to present evidence which the Canadian judicial system has deprived them of articulating, and would render its own verdict before the people of Canada.

The SRDF won the support of such eminent international personalities as Noam Chomsky, Jessica Mitford, Linus Pauling and Benjamin Spock. Among prominent Canadians are Margaret Atwood, Pierre Berton, Clayton Ruby and Grace Hartman, along with important organizations such as the Law Union of Ontario, the 10th Federal Convention of the New Democratic Party and district labour councils from St. John, New Brunswick on the East Coast to Victoria, B.C. on the West Coast.

October 16, 1981
40 Homewood Ave, #2311
Toronto, M4Y 2K2

Dear Brian Palmer
Simon Fraser University
Burnaby, B.C.

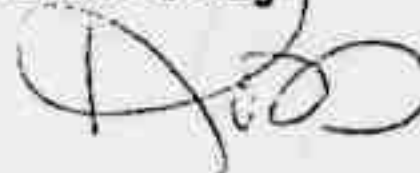
It was a pleasure to read your extended essay in the summer issue of Our Generation. And not only for the good things that you say about my efforts, the Forward Group's and the SRDF's (which I take it includes certain lawyers who so freely gave their services,

their
It was necessary to chastize the Left for ~~its~~ failure to effectively respond to the challenge of the revelations about the RCMP and the opportunity that my suit gave them to do so. You would be surprised how widespread and how common, from sources that certainly should know better, there is a tendency to accept and even try to convince me to accept the label of "subversive", yes, even given the explanation as to its legal definition and its criminality in the Criminal Code

The support the suit managed to win is quite impressive. But it is regrettably, largely a surface, a minimal support, every bit of it hard won all the way. When I think of what it should have been and what I thought it could have been I feel enraged. Of course no one has ever before tried to intervene in a situation and tried to develop it in the way we tried ~~to intervene~~ (McMurtry named a specific organization and fingered its leaders) Only my very conscious effort to conduct a model campaign which the future might consider an exemplary one has restrained me from expressing this rage against naive ultra-leftism and sad pitiful sectarianism and keep it directed in a popular educational way against the RCMP and the Canadian state.

Thanks for the good words.

sincerely



Ross Dowson

I take it that Our Generation or Black Rose did not know that much of our material on the suit has been published in Dowson v the RCMP circulated by Beatty and Church who subsequently published in paperback Ian Adams
S - Portrait of a Spy. Alastair McColl, editor of Simon Fraser (PEAK) gave it a good review last year.

Star

62-1987

R. Dowson, #2311
40 Homewood Ave.,
Toronto, M4Y 2K2 - 961-4554

Letter to the Editor

October 28, 1981

The cartoon on your editorial page of October 27 goes beyond the permissible being nothing but a slanderous attack on all those who are doing whatever they can to counteract the ideological preparations for a nuclear war and hence disaster for all humanity.

It depicts protesters against the nuclear arms drive as taking their slogans and symbols from out of the handy arsenal of US R President Brezhnev.

Perhaps this sneering of anti-nuclear arms protesters by association with the "bete noire" should cause you to reconsider your only too recent coverage of both the Krever and McDonald Royal Commissions on RCMP "dirty tracks." If only Judge Krever admonished the RCMP for practising "thought control" and Judge McDonald censured the RCMP for denying the right to legitimate dissident protest.

sincerely

Ross Dowson

Nat
Prunkel

Ross Dowson #2311
40 Homewood Ave
M4Y 2K2

October 30, 1981

Robert Sims
Montreal, Quebec

Dear Bob:

I received your letter of October 5 with the enclosed tax and insurance payments for this year and your comments on some of the options that you and associates are considering with regards to your relations with Camp Poundmaker Incorporated.

I have circulated copies of your letter to all the shareholders so they can commence thinking about it and I am now preparing to call a meeting that could formally consider your proposition.

As I understand the last paragraph of your letter you are proposing that the corporation or a group of its shareholders buy out the shares held by the Toronto Social Science and Educational Society (TSS&ES) and Joan Newbigging. You also suggest, apparently from your contact with shareholders Riddell and Bryant that the corporation or a group of shareholders might also buy out their shares at the same time. Since I have heard nothing from them of a contradictory character I am assuming that this is correct.

Of course I myself am in no position to speak on behalf of the corporation or any group of its shareholders. Since one group of shareholders through you, which I will call the party of the first part, is presenting a proposition to another group of shareholders, which I will call the party of the second part, which together constitute all the shareholders of the corporation, I understand that the offer is in effect to the corporation as such, with the party of the second part temporarily, formally constituting itself, with the agreement of the party of the first part, as the corporation. I do not see how the acceptance of any proposition by the parties of the second part could otherwise be taken seriously by the parties of the first part.

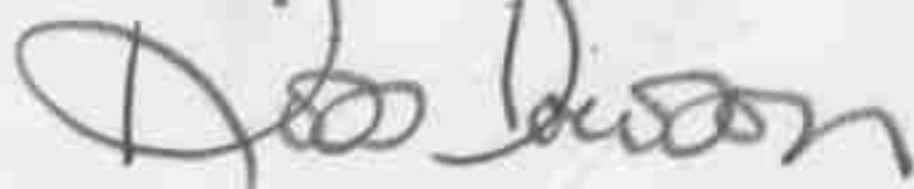
I am prepared to call a meeting of the parties of the second part as you suggest and to open up a discussion with them. I am prepared to place before them for their consideration your offer to sell the shares of the parties of the first part for a price which I have determined from my reading of the Camp Poundmaker Incorporated Agreement of 1975.

For your offer to sell, according to the agreement of our non-profit Camp Poundmaker Corporation (see Clause 14, Clause 17, and the attached Schedule A) you should be recompensed as follows: Newbigging-\$700, Riddell-\$700, Bryant-\$700 and TSS&ES-\$2,800 --total \$4,900.

Acceptance of such an offer by the parties of the second part ~~would of course release the named parties of the first part~~ from all rights and from all obligations now currently in force according to the statement of agreement. Since the corporation has no liquid assets it would be the responsibility of the parties of the second part to find ways within the spirit of the agreement to raise funds to recompence the parties of the first part - possibly by selling the lots to other suitable persons who would thereupon become party to the Poundmaker agreement.

I am prepared to proceed along these lines as soon as you, as representing the parties of the first part, state your agreement

sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Ross Dowson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail.

Ross Dowson

cc to all shareholders

November 1, 1981
Ross Dowson #2311
Toronto, M4Y2K2

Anne Dowson, Ottawa

Dear Anne;

Following our phone conversation a few minutes ago.

That Manifesto could be the most significant development in years. One could only expect that its authors intend to really use it and in light of the stature of some of them with real connections in the labor movement it is intended to structure a mass labor party in Quebec. While it will no doubt be more radical than the NDP, reflecting the much higher radicalization in Quebec, it will brush aside all possibilities offered the NDP by absorbing anyone who is serious within its ranks. It will put colossal pressure on the revolutionary groups who are already in crisis (En Lutte particularly) If they fail to take a correct supportive orientation to it they will doom their future as sects. This happy projection is possible in light of who are associated with it already. Since the PQ is already too radical for the NDP parliamentary caucus to associate with it, the NDP brass won't touch this formation with a ten foot pole---it is independentist--the crucial issue for the NDP brass who are fanatically and suicidically federalist. Since they are independentists they will not be overly concerned about establishing connections with Anglophones who even agree with their main line as we in Forward do. Thinking it over they probably haven't got an English version of their statement--although I really hope they have and that they send it right on to us.

This probable development along with the possibility of the PQ running candidates in Quebec against the Liberals to take seats in Ottawa have truly earth shaking ~~possibilities~~ possibilities. Of course the NDP youth in the Ottawa area --the leftists--have every interest in getting them a hearing--inviting them to make their case at Carleton and U of O and forming ~~some~~ collaborative relations with any youth movement they might build in Hull and elsewhere.

Great days

The date for the appeal at the Supreme Court has been set as December 7.

I am sure that you can think of more workable ideas than I can.

Yes it would be good to take the whole matter up with the Civil Liberties Association in Ottawa-Hull. I did a mailing several weeks ago of the enclosed material--but of course it is possible that they have let the matter slip out of their minds. Your going to their next meeting in Ottawa would be very good. Under separate cover I have mailed you about 15 copies of key material. The insert from a back issue of Forward --the one that contains the Keable evaluation also contains what I think is a very good article for anyone who wants to know what the Dowson efforts are all about--my address at McMaster University. The press release noting our ~~objection~~ ~~to the civil suit~~ also you should note that we have intended to appeal the proceedings which we are appealing. backed by the Canadian Civil Liberties Union. The Toronto office brief I would think that they would feel inclined to go along with any suggestion that they should go down to the court house and hear Scott

Dewar & Ke

2.

Possibly send Dwyer Dewar if she is a member with a watching brief. If you have a calendar pad handy it would be good to take a note for say December 5 to go down to see the editor of the main Ottawa daily to tell him about the appeal and give him a copy of the three ~~pieces~~ pieces I am sending. They might send a reporter--so might, if you phone them, the G and W Ottawa desk. It would be good if you were able to drop around ~~the~~ the editoris of both the Carleton and U of O and the Canadian University Press office ~~and suggest~~ given them the material and suggest that they write up something on the whole suit with the timely lead of our lawyers appearing before the Supreme Court. If you could do these things that would be excellent--I doubt if a picket line could be mobilized--although this is the only attempt to lay charges against the RCMP which cuts across Kaplan's and the McDonald Commissions line that far from laying charges for their breaking the law the law should be changed to enable them to legitimately do what they did and are probably still doing. I don't know whether you noticed but Justice Krever's demand that that the RCMP divulge the name of their informants who broke the security of health information which had the support of the Ontario Appeal Court was turned down by the Supreme Court only a week or so ago.

If the campus papers could be convinced to carry articles on the suit within the next few weeks it would be very good. I think I sent you a copy of the Excalibur article of last spring (York U) and in the add for the pamphlet we quote the excellent article that appeared in The Peak of Simon Fraser. If either university papers carried an article it would be worthwhile setting up a table to sell the pamphlet--12 copies of which I sold to the Law Union on Friday night. But there is the problem of your work load. Many possibilities if you have the time and could probe around.

affectionately

Ross

78/
November 23, 1981

Editor

In his interesting commentary on Russian vanguard art at the Guggenheim Museum John Bentley Mays makes an error that should be noted.

Vladimir
He has Lenin in 1920 "already complaining about the prominence of such artistic ideologues such as Kandinsky, Malevich, Rodchenko and Tatlin" -- and continues without a break -- "by the early thirties" works such as theirs had been "completely displaced." Thus we have Lenin whose name is inextricably identified with the victory and the projection of the October Revolution and who died in January 1924, being linked to its degeneration.

That Lenin protested to Minister of Education Lunacharsky about was the pretence of the artists around Proletcult that they and they alone were the "true representatives of Proletarian culture." Lenin, as an orthodox Marxist, was vigorously opposed to party and state intervention on the side of any of the artistic currents that flourished in his days, but was for full freedom of artistic expression. It was Stalin, and his mouthpiece Zhdanov who ushered in the epoch of socialist realism.

Rather than, as Mays puts it "the youthful revolutionaries of 1917 had begun to run out of steam by the early twenties," they were suppressed. That is why he can say that George Costakis when in the employ of the Canadian Embassy in Moscow "discovered" them.

sincerely

Ross Dowson
961-4554
40 Homewood Ave.,
Toronto

November 26, 1981

Ross Dowson, #2311
40 Homewood Ave.,
Toronto, M4Y 2K2
961-4544

Commission of Inquiry
Concerning Certain Activities of the
Royal Canadian Mounted Police

Dear Sirs:

It has been brought to my attention that there is an omission in your Second Report titled Freedom and Security Under the Law.

It involves Appendix Q - page 1227 titled Places and dates of Hearings to receive briefs and the persons and organizations that presented briefs to those hearings.

It does not list myself as being one of the persons who presented briefs to that hearing. The simple facts are that I appeared at that hearing and that I presented not one but two briefs to that hearing. I sent a copy of one brief that I had intended to present verbally to the hearing, in advance to your Ottawa offices at the time. -- on January the ninth by registered mail. It was clear to me at the January 18th hearings that you acknowledged receipt of that brief.

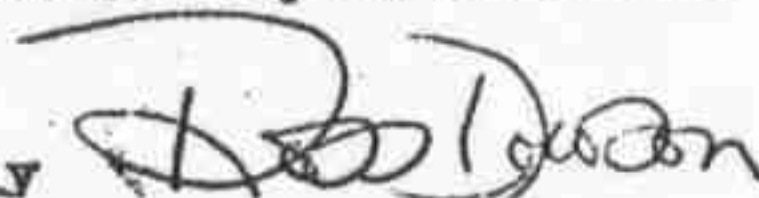
However on the basis of a Notice to the Public that you caused to appear Jan. 14 in the daily press, which defined the nature of the January 18 hearing in what to me appeared in a totally different way, I prepared another brief. This brief, copies of which I actually handed to each member of the commission was read by me and heard by all those in attendance at this public hearing. It was duly noted in the press reports of this hearing.

While page 1227 lists the names of persons and organizations who appeared it notably fails to list my name or make mention of my briefs, neither the one forwarded to your offices nor the one that I read into the official record of the hearing and upon which at least two members of the commission made comments.

Therefore, contrary to what the citizens of Canada should expect the record is not factually accurate. Furthermore, and more important it seems to me, my integrity is involved. I wrote and published a book titled DOWSON V RCMP, a copy of which I forwarded to your commission as soon as it came off the press, and copies of which I forwarded to the National Library. It contains many of my personal opinions on the subject of your enquiry and on your commission, but it also presents as fact that I appeared before the Toronto hearings, that I presented two briefs and it actually reproduces the two briefs that I presented. The veracity of my claims and any particular use that I may wish to make of these two briefs is obviously questioned by your report's failure to mention my appearance and submissions to the hearing.

I would like you to correspond with me just as soon as possible as to what can be done to correct this omission in your official report as it has been released to the public

sincerely



Ross Dowson

December 22, 1981

Forward, Box 778, Adelaide St. P.
Toronto M5C 2K1

Ted Willcox
Thompson, Manitoba

Dear Ted:

Gord Doctorow turned your article of somewhere around November 3 to me to prepare for the coming issue of Forward that we are at long last preparing for the printer.

It was very good to get your article--even though the vagary of our deadlines makes it very difficult for us to meet our obligations to contributors. Here we have an important episode in the Canadian class struggle. You present us with a vivid picture up to the eve of the November 5th meeting. Excellent --the demands of the local, the company's counter offer insight into what's happening in the community --the concerned citizens coalition, etc. We have not usually carried such lengthy reports on individual trade union actions --it is a little over half of one of our 8 pages but it is some much on-the-spot reporting that there is no reason why we should not carry all of it. It would give our readers ^{an idea of} what we visualize a good workers paper would look like. And of course if we did not for some other reason feel ready to make that presentation on this occasion --well we could cut it a bit down to size. You are obviously an experienced writer and have had to suffer that experience. And of course we follow the Star(Toronto), the Globe and Mail and one of the out of town Southam papers--so we could lead off with an update--right up to a December 17 evaluation of the settlement by a Lawrence Welsh in the Globe and Mail. But.....

Yes, but, there are too many problems that I feel uncomfortable about, that ~~in~~ block me from taking on that task. ~~There~~ The dropping of the one year contract which would have synchronized Thompson with Sudbury was a substantial setback. What happened to the COLA finally? The November 5 offer I gather was more or less the pre-strike offer. The vote, 673 to 543 showed that the company had made some considerable inroads against the militants... ~~what a mess~~ whose numbers were cut down by December 15 from 673 to 245. Within a month some 428 workers switched over. And now we have a dispute as to what the accepted offer actually amounts to with the company claiming that it was the original, shifted around. Does the hassle of the president with a grievance from one of the staff take on more significance than it early appeared to. A very interesting situation--almost a test tube experience, a one company town with a very stable number of unionists casting their vote at each turning point. And then we have the NDP election victory taking place at the same time.

Ted --I am going to cop out--meaning I am unprepared to work over your article and at the same time I am going to ^{tell} the editors that as valuable as it is, it is insufficient to go into this issue as is. If I were out there or you in here we could work this out. Have you time and energy to take up your typewriter again. ..with our now preparing to lock it up around Jan 4.

Sorry about all this---and best seasons greetings.

Ross Dowson

Ed Broadbent
Ottawa

(Undated, found in 1981)

Dear Ed:

of France

In yesterday's mail the enclosed letter from President Mitterand, addressed as you will see from the cover to the president of the Socialist Party of Canada in Toronto, was turned over to me. It was forwarded to me at Forward Books or Forward Publishing Association - well known by the staff at the Adelaide Street P.O. as socialist and strongly pro-NDP. I took the liberty of opening it as it is not really clear to whom it is addressed and of course what it concerns.

On reading its contents it would appear to me that President Mitterand thinks our party's name is the Socialist Party of Canada (at the founding convention I favored adoption of the name Labour Party). Another alternative would be that the letter actually is intended for the Socialist Party of Canada, remnants of which continue to function in British Columbia I think, but to my knowledge nowhere else, and certainly not in Toronto. Possibly the ~~Parisian~~ ^{Parisian} office staff favoring reality over mythology sent it to Toronto ~~rather than Ottawa~~ ^{decision making}.
The real center of Cdn ruling class ~~is~~ ^{decision making} rather than Ottawa.

At any rate I am sending it on to you to dispose of as you see fit.

comradely

Ross Dowson
2311 -40 Homewood Ave
Toronto